5 The Grove

Tree Officer Comment Response

**2021/4153/P & 2021/4931/L - Excavation of basement under front garden; alterations to land known as Highgate Green**

Tree Officer comments

- *The scheme involves the removal of 2 two Irish yew trees from the front garden of the property. The trees are highly visible from the public realm, contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area and to the setting of the listed building. The front garden basement will prohibit almost all future front garden planting apart from a narrow strip at the southern side of the front garden.*

Response:

The two yews in question are T21 and 22 within the arboriculturist's tree survey, rated as category C in quality according to BS5837. This rating is due to their limited quality owing to being planted next to walls and paved surfaces in what is thought to have been the 80's/ 90's.

Our proposals remove the yews, which are offset to the historical façade, and plant two large fig trees in planters to frame the entrance gates and front door. These trees (Ficus carica) would be able to grow to a height of 2-3m in their containers - sufficient to provide public visual benefit. We agree that yews have a place in the conservation area and have proposed a yew hedge to grow inside the front fence and engage with the similar front boundaries of number 6, to enhance the continuity of The Grove. These yews would replace the variegated ivy and slightly dilapidated board screen along the length of No.5's frontage.

In addition to the figs trees and yews we are including planting for climbers over the front of the house and then taller Dicksonia antarctica along the long boundary with 4 The Grove to establish the historical boundary line.

- *The proposed replacement planting is all in planter which may not be sustainable.*

Response:

The containers currently specified, bespoke zinc planters 0.65m high to match the height of the existing boundary wall, will be provide adequate soil depth for hedging plants, as well as a generous width for roots of ~1.1m. This allows for the planting of herbaceous plants on the house side of the hedge as well as the hedge itself. The use of planters is necessary due to the limited planting zone below this section. Open beds will be restored to match the quality of the house along the boundary with 4 The Grove to enable characterful Dicksonia and a variety of flowering climbers and shrubs to grow freely. Yew has been selected as a species which grows well in containers as well as to match the contribution to the existing character of the grove.

Their ongoing maintenance will also be of importance to the residents in order to provide an attractive frontage to their home, and will therefore be cared for going forward. These will be stipulated by a rigorous maintenance regime of automated watering, feeding, pruning and root trimming, carried out by a professional gardener.

- *Two mature lime trees were removed from outside the front garden under TPO tree works application ref. 2019/1539/T. Two replacement tree have not been planted. This can be rectified through this application and may prevent enforcement proceedings.*

Response:

This was something our clients were previously unaware of and thus was not reflected in our proposals. Replacement planting of one small leafed lime, as specified in application 2019/1539/T Condition 1, of 14-16cm girth, has now been added to the proposals in the position of the tree their previously. Please see updated drawing 381-L-P-111.

- *Three trees are proposed for removal for the green open space opposite the dwelling. All three trees are in conflict with the fence and are not sustainable in the long-term. As such, their removal is considered acceptable subject to suitable replacements.*

**2021/4146/P & 2021/4990/L - Extension to existing outbuilding, including outdoor shower and roof terrace above; relocation of swimming pool; erection of pergola; associated landscaping**

Tree Officer comments

- *The scheme involves the removal of almost all of a green corridor from along the rear boundary of the site, including G1, a large cat. B group of trees which consist of Holly, Lilac, Cider Gum, Cherry Laurel, Portugal Laurel, Black Mulberry, Hornbeam, Holm Oak, Silver Birch, Norway Spruce, Leyland Cypress, Wellingtonia, Magnolia and Japanese Maple. The landscaping details refer to a "woodland walk" in this area but no details are included in terms of proposed species and sizes. The CGI images included show low level, multi-stemmed trees which are not considered to mitigate the loss of canopy cover provide by the larger existing trees. Further details of proposed planting in this area are required prior to determination.*

A planting plan (drawing 381-L-P-305) and accompanying schedule of this area has been submitted in response to these comments, showing the proposals for this area of the garden; this includes all proposed species and sizes. The intent for this area is to create a densely canopied perimeter route for the garden.

The CGI images are a representative illustration of 1 or 2 year timescale, showing the size of the trees at this point. The species proposed have been selected to ensure this area is drought tolerant and a sustainable selection of trees and shrubs, with at least a 75 year timescale born in mind with regards to climate change.

Where the previous group had out-grown their intended size and screened the key feature of the garden - the uninterrupted view to the heath - the proposed planting looks to restore the historical view and secure the safety of the large retaining wall to the rear of the property by reducing the loading pressure upon it. 58 large shrubs and trees are proposed to provide a near continuous canopy, as is desired for the woodland walk, on

the establishment of the trees in this area. These will give a proportionally appropriate size to the trees in the area, with the ultimate height and spread of the larger tree species proposed here over 10m. The garden will also benefit from a more prominent and biodiverse mid story of shrubs, something the large conifers and evergreens currently prevent. Furthermore, the entire area is proposed to be underplanted with perennials to further provide a biodiversity benefit when compared to the densely shaded and dry floor currently beneath this group.